

**Relationships in Health Education:
National Standards, Risk Behaviors and Health Education Content Areas
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Health education in schools is essential to provide students with the learning opportunities that will increase their knowledge and skills to be and stay healthy. The goal of all health education is to assist children, adolescents and adults toward increased **health literacy**. Health literacy is defined by the Joint Committee on Health Education Standards as follows:

Health Literacy is the capacity of an individual to obtain, interpret and understand basic services and the competence to use such information and services in ways that are health-enhancing. A health literate person is:

- a critical thinker
- a responsible, productive citizen
- a self-directed learner
- an effective communicator

Health education has several key organizational frameworks that are used to determine scope, sequence, process and emphasis for instruction. **[Connections slide]** These include:

- National Health Education Standards
- Adolescent Risk Behaviors—CDC
- Health Education Content Areas

The **National Health Education Standards** were developed by a joint committee on standards that included representatives from the major professional organizations involved in school health education and sponsored by the American Cancer Society. These standards improve student learning by providing a foundation for curriculum development, instruction and assessment of learning performance. Also included are critical *Opportunity to Learn Standards for Health Education* that delineate needed coordination for an effective delivery system.

The CCSSO~SCASS Health Education Assessment Project uses the National Health Education Standards as the organizational framework for evaluating student performance. These standards show the importance of skills development in health literacy. Six of the seven standards focus on the application of skills and one on increasing conceptual knowledge. The standards are:

1. Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promotion products and services.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.
4. Students will analyze the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health.

The ***CDC Adolescent Risk Behaviors*** identify specific health risks that emerge as children move into adolescence. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified these risks through extensive statistical analysis of morbidity and mortality data national wide. The following preventable behaviors put the health of the nation's children and youth at risk:

- Tobacco Use
- Dietary patterns that contribute to disease
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection or other STDs and unintended pregnancy
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Behaviors that result in intentional and unintentional injury

Curriculum planners can focus on instruction that encourages health enhancing choices relative to these behaviors. This list shows educators what the health risks are for their students. Health education goals in the nation's schools include both improved educational achievement as well as improved health status for students.

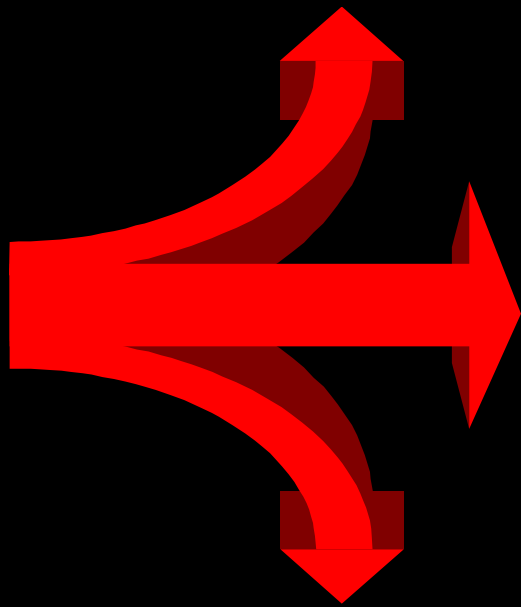
The ***Health Education Content Areas*** are content organizers for health education. Many state and local frameworks use these or similar topics as the strands of instruction. Scope and sequence of curricula is often tied to health education content areas. These areas serve as organizing elements for factual health knowledge and concepts. Specific health education content areas vary from state to state and district to district. The following is an alphabetical list of typical content areas:

Community Health
Consumer Health
Environmental Health

Family Life
Mental and Emotional Health
Injury Prevention and Safety
Nutrition
Personal Health
Prevention and Control of Disease
Substance Use and Abuse

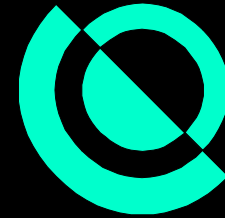
The relationship among *standards*, *risk areas* and *content areas* is that they serve as the organizational infrastructure for health education. Each has a unique contribution to the infrastructure. The CCSSO~SCASS Assessment system is based on the National Health Education Standards which is a synthesis that addresses the adolescent risk behaviors and the content areas. Together these documents can be used to determine scope, sequence and process for curriculum planning for health instruction and assessment of student performance.

Connections



- ◆ National Standards for Health Education
- ◆ CDC Adolescent Risk Areas
- ◆ Health Education Content Areas

Health Literacy



Health literacy is the capacity of an individual to obtain, interpret, and understand basic health information and services and the competence to use such information and services in ways which are health-enhancing.

Joint Committee on Health Education Standards

National Health Education Standards

- 1** ~ comprehend concepts related to health promotion & disease prevention
- 2** ~ ability to access valid health information & health-promoting products and services
- 3** ~ ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks
- 4** ~ analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health
- 5** ~ ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health
- 6** ~ ability to use goal-setting & decision-making skills to enhance health
- 7** ~ ability to advocate for personal, family, & community health

CDC Adolescent Risk Behaviors

- ◆ Tobacco use
- ◆ Dietary patterns contribute to disease
- ◆ Sedentary lifestyle
- ◆ Sexual behaviors that result in HIV infection/other STDs and unintended pregnancy
- ◆ Alcohol and other drug use
- ◆ Behaviors that result in intentional and unintentional injury

Health Education Content Areas

- ◆ Community Health
- ◆ Consumer Health
- ◆ Environmental Health
- ◆ Family Life
- ◆ Mental and Emotional Health
- ◆ Injury Prevention and Safety
- ◆ Nutrition
- ◆ Personal Health
- ◆ Prevention and Control of Disease
- ◆ Substance Use and Abuse